

of the country is well reflected in the literature. The earliest Kannada work so far found belongs to the ninth century but it is so finished a piece of composition that the art of verse should have been cultivated in the language for some centuries previously. Poets have written in the language almost continuously ever since widening range of subjects, developing metres, and enriching expression in the language. Mahamahopadhyaya Praktana Vimarsa Vichakshana (the late) R. Narasimhacharya who compiled the lives of Kannada poets gave the names of over a thousand poets in all. It is true that not much of the work is of permanent worth or universal value but this worth and this value are not found in much literature of any age or clime. It is also unfair to ask of all literary composition, so soon as it reaches the level that we call good, that it should be poetry not for an age but for all time and not for the people for whom it is written but for all climes. If a work filled a genuine need of the time in which it was composed and pleases readers of a later generation -who are sympathetically disposed to the setting of its ideas, it should be considered as successful. Many books in Kannada literature should be considered successful in this sense while some small number will, when they have become known, be accepted as satisfying even the higher standard of universal value. Among the most popular works in the language are the *Jaiinini Bharata* of I[^]akshmisra, the *Bharafa* of Kumara Vyasa and the Virasaiva Puranas. The poems of Pampa and his successors in Sanskrit metres are all in a highly

polished style and show great skill in composition.